New Zealand SOGI statement:

- New Zealand supports equal rights for all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We remain concerned at instances of inequality based on a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

- New Zealand welcomes the Independent Expert’s focus on the protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- We express our continued support for the mandate of the independent expert and wish to stress the importance of this work.

- While New Zealand appreciates the scope of the report, we wish to bring attention to those elements of the report that specifically relate to violence against individuals in the LGBTI community.

- As noted in the report, despite the well-established framework within international human rights law that prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, the UN human rights mechanisms continue to receive reports, from all regions, of violence against individuals in the LGBTI community.

- These reports include acts of physical violence, (such as murder, beatings, kidnappings and sexual assault), and psychological violence (such as threats, coercion and the arbitrary deprivation of liberty, including forced psychiatric incarceration). Further, when individuals from the LGBTI community seek protection from such violence, they can be subject to harassment, humiliation, abuse or arrest.
• New Zealand considers the level of violence faced by individuals in the LGBTI community to be of significant concern. We urge member states to join us in condemning any act of violence based on a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

• Protecting LGBTI individuals from violence does not require the creation of new rights. The legal obligations of States to uphold the human rights of all individuals, including LGBTI persons, without distinction of any kind are well established in international human rights law.

• The violence perpetrated against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity inhibits the realization of the 2030 Agenda. If we truly aim to create a society where no one is left behind, governments should offer LGBTI persons support and opportunities, without discrimination and without violence of any kind, in full respect of their human dignity and rights.

• New Zealand asks the I.E. what will be the single biggest challenge to overcome when tackling the issue of violence faced by the LGBTI community?